

Food and Nutrition Services: Hurricane Matthew

Q&A

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. **Can ABAWDS come back in and apply for regular benefits?** *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*
ABAWD policy still applies to regular benefits.
2. **If the local agency has tried to communicate with the county emergency manager and has not received the help needed, what are our next steps?** *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*
Contact your Area Coordinator for Recovery
3. **Since it may be days or weeks before a disaster FNS program is in place, can you do a press release giving an update?** *(Posted on 10/12/2016)* *(Posted on 10/14/2016)*
The Department is currently working on a press release. **Once completed, counties will receive notification via Listserv and through the Director's Association, which will contain a copy of the press release for distribution/posting.**
4. **Is NC FAST available on Sundays before noon?** *(Posted on 10/13/2016)*
Typically NC FAST is not available until noon on Sundays, currently we are working to try to have it available earlier than noon.
5. **Can NC FAST have extended keying hours?** *(Posted on 10/14/2016)*
Yes. NC Fast will be available from 5:00 A.M. until 8:00 P.M., except on Sundays, until Disaster FNS begins.
6. **If a recipient goes to another county with a recertification, can the 2nd county process that recertification for the other county? Or do they need to tell the recipient to take their recertification to the county they live in?** *(Posted on 10/13/2016)*
The 2nd county can process the recertification for the original county, however the 2nd county should not take ownership in NC FAST.
7. **Where should policy questions be sent?** *(Posted on 10/13/2016)*
Send your questions to OST at ost.policy.questions@dhhs.nc.gov.
8. **Can workers in non-affected counties help workers in the affected counties?** *(Posted on 10/13/2016)*
Yes, this effort is being coordinated with the Director's Association.
9. **Will the NC FAST sandbox be available to test the disaster program?** *(Posted on 10/13/2016)*
No, but there will be a webinar presented to counties.

10. Will the deadlines for submitting administrative data related to the 1571 and Subsidized Child Care be extended for impacted counties? *(Posted on 10/14/2016)*

Yes. The DHHS Controllers Office has extended the deadline for impacted counties to submit the 1571 Report to Tuesday, October 18, 2016. A county that determines they are unable to meet the 10/18/2016 deadline should contact their Local Business Liaison (LBL) for assistance. They may also contact the Controllers Office at 919-527-6150.

The deadline for submitting information for Subsidized Child Care has also been extended to Tuesday, October 18, 2106 for impacted counties. A county that determines they are unable to meet the 10/18/2016 deadline should contact their Local Business Liaison (LBL) for assistance.

11. What number should county agencies provide to customers who have questions? *(Posted on 10/14/2016)*

Refer them to the EBT Call Center at 1- 866-719-0141.

REPLACEMENT BENEFITS

1. Can FNS recipients request Replacement FNS benefits in a county other than the county they live and receive FNS? *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*

Yes, current FNS recipients can apply for replacement benefits in any county. The county taking the request for replacement benefits must not take ownership of that case in NCFAS.

2. What is the date of the "incident" for replacement benefits? *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*

In regard to replacement benefits, the date of the incident is the date the recipient states they lost their food.

3. New USDA Interpretation: Can a recipient that has already received their October FNS benefits request a replacement? *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*

Yes. Ask the client the date food was lost and the dollar amount lost. Replace the benefit amount the household states was lost, not to exceed household's monthly allotment. (It is not a requirement to check ebtEDGE)

4. New USDA Interpretation: If a client has not received October FNS benefits are they still eligible for a replacement? *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*

Yes. Ask client the date food was lost and dollar amount lost. Process a replacement for September benefits based on client's statement of food amount lost, not to exceed the household's monthly allotment. (It is not a requirement to check ebtEDGE)

5. If a September replacement benefit was issued for Tropical Storm Hermine, can the household request another replacement for Hurricane Matthew for the same month? *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*

Yes

Will NC FAST allow a second replacement for the same month? *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*

Yes

6. Are replacement benefits only for the counties approved for the Individual Assistance Declaration by the President? *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*

No, the individual manual replacement benefits are for any recipient in any county.

7. If a client request a replacement of benefits can the affidavit be mailed to the client and does the date of the call protect the 10 days? *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*

Yes, an affidavit (DSS-1678) can be mailed to the client as long as the request is made within ten calendars days of the incident (the loss of food).

Do not issue a replacement if the agency does not receive the signed affidavit (DSS-1678) within ten calendar days from the date the replacement request was made. (FNS 910) The affidavit does not need to be notarized.

8. If a case terminated the end of September (they are not active in October) can they receive replacement benefits for September? *(Posted on 10/12/2016)*

Yes, they can as long as they state they had a food loss from the benefits they received in Sept. This is true for any recipient, including ABAWD that have used their three months.

9. If a September FNS application was denied can that individual receive replacement benefits? *(Posted on 10/13/2016)*

No, if the application was denied, then no benefits were issued, so there are no benefits to replace. That person can make a new application at any time per policy.

10. Do clients need to provide a list of lost food? *(Posted on 10/13/2016)*

No. Lists for lost food are NOT to be requested.

11. Can non-merit employees process replacement benefits or Disaster FNS? *(Posted on 10/13/2016)*

No. Only merit based employees can process replacements or Disaster FNS.

12. How do we issue replacement benefits for cases with claims established? *(Posted on 10/13/2016)*

Issue the amount of food the client states they loss, not to exceed the amount of benefits the client actually received.

13. How do we process replacement benefits for (elderly) SNAP recipients? *(Posted on 10/13/2016)*

SNAP replacement benefits should be processed the same way that Simplified Reporting benefits are replaced.

14. If recipient is denied replacement benefits, do they get notification? *(Posted on 10/13/2016)*

A replacement, unlike an application, does not require a denial notice. If a replacement is started and it is determined the client should not receive the replacement, such as the client has already received a replacement for the same disaster, the worker would document the case and delete the replacement evidence.

15. How are September benefits issued for cases that are currently closed? (Posted on 10/14/2016)

Workers should reactivate the closed case, making sure the case is in active status. Follow the steps in the Job Aid: *Issuing Replacement Benefits*. Use the reason of "Food destroyed in a disaster". The evidence must be applied and approved by the Supervisor on the same day.

16. Will the replacement period extend beyond 10 days? (Posted on 10/14/2016)

A waiver is in development to submit to USDA requesting an extension of the 10 day replacement timeframe for counties that have an Individual Assistance Declaration. If approved by USDA, the waiver is only applicable for IA counties, not statewide.

17. How should counties that were not part of the disaster area verify power outages for benefit replacement requests? (Posted on 10/14/2016)

The utility companies asked that such requests not be submitted as they do not have the capacity to provide timely responses due to other disaster related priorities. The county's local Emergency Management Team is the best point of contact for such information.

18. What are the reasons why a replacement request would not process? (Posted on 10/14/2016)

Check case for accurate and complete information and ensure the Supervisor approves on the same day.

AUTOMATIC (MASS) FNS REPLACEMENT BENEFITS

1. Should counties continue processing recertifications? (Posted on 10/12/2016)

Yes, it is very important that recertifications are processed in the event an Automatic (Mass) FNS replacement occurs, these cases will be included in the batch. Any recertification keyed after the Automatic (Mass) FNS replacement batch will require the replacement to be manually keyed by the county.

2. What do we do with affidavits received, but not keyed if we do Mass Replacement? (Posted on 10/13/2016)

Per FNS Manual Section 910.01C replace benefits within ten calendar days of the report or within two days of receiving the DSS-1678 whichever is later. Per 910.04 if a disaster allotment (mass replacement) is issued prior to issuing the manual replacement, deny the manual replacement allotment. You will need to document in NC FAST.

DISASTER FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES (DFNS)

1. Will Disaster FNS run for 5 days? (Posted on 10/13/2016)

Currently there is no Disaster FNS program in place. This will be addressed if the Disaster FNS waiver is approved.

Counties Approved for an Individual Assistance Declaration

10/11/2016 Beaufort, Bladen, Columbus, Cumberland, Edgecombe, Hoke, Lenoir,
Nash, Pitt and Robeson,

10/12/2016 Bertie, Johnston, Wayne, and Wilson

10/13/2016 Greene, Harnett and Sampson

10/13/2016 Jones and Gates

10/14/2016 Duplin, Pender, Dare and Hyde